

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7609

INFO AMCONSUL ZAGREB

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 5067

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR YO

SUBJ: TITO REMARKS ON AMBASSADOR

REF: STATE 190425(NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. EMBASSY FEELS STRONGLY THAT YUGOSLAVS SHOULD BE LEFT IN NO DOUBT THAT ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST AMBASSADOR AND U.S. POLICY IN TITO INTERVIEW ARE INCORRECT. CONSEQUENTLY, WE HAVE MADE AVAILABLE TO YUGOSLAV PRESS TEXT OF DEPARTMENT RELEASE (REFTEL) AND CLARIFYING ISSUE FOR BENEFIT OF OTHER EMBASSIES ON THEIR REQUEST. EMBASSY WILL MAKE DEPARTMENT'S STATEMENT AVAILABLE TO FSFA TOMORROW. WE RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT CALL IN AMBASSADOR BELOVSKI AND CLEARLY SHOW HOW YUGOSLAV PRESS HAS MISCONSTRUED AMBASSADOR SILBERMAN'S EARLIER STATEMENTS, FALSELY LINKING THEM WITH SO-CALLED PRESSURE ON YUGOSLAVIA JUST BEFORE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE. FURTHER, IN DOING SO WE RECOMMEND DEPARTMENT REJECT ALLEGATIONS IN TITO'S STATEMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT TITO'S COMMENTS ON AMBASSADOR SILBERMAN GIVEN IN TANJUG INTERVIEW OF TITO JULY 30 AND SUBSEQUENTLY FLASHED AROUND THE WORLD WERE CARRIED IN THE MIDST OF ENTIRE TITO INTERVIEW PUBLISHED AUGUST 1 IN BOTH "POLITIKA" AND "BORBA". INTERVIEW ITSELF, WHICH IS CURTAIN-RAISER TO FORTHCOMING NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE IN COLOMBO, WAS CARRIED PROMINENTLY BY BOTH ON FRONT
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PAGES. TITO'S REMARK ON AMBASSADOR IS PICKED UP ON

JUMP PAGES IN BOTH PAPERS WITH BORBA TITLING SECTION
"BIG PRESSURES ON NON-ALIGNED" AND POLITIKA AS "CAMPAIGN
OF U.S. AMBASSADOR AGAINST SFRY."

3. WE APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S RAPID RESPONSE TO
SATURDAY'S WIRE ACCOUNTS ON THE ISSUE. WE HAVE OURSELVES
SENT TO YUGOSLAV PRESS(TANJUG, POLITIKA, BORBA, NIN)
COMPLETE TEXT OF DEPARTMENT'S STATEMENT.

4. BELIEVE THE FUROR HAS ARISEN NOT AS RESULT OF
AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS TO PRESS AT BELGRADE AIRPORT ON
RELEASE OF TOTH BUT RATHER AS RESULT OF YUGOSLAV READING
OF U.S. PRESS PLAY. YUGOSLAVS SEEM PARTICULARLY UPSET
OVER PIECES IN "NEW YORK TIMES" QUESTIONING ENTIRE RANGE
OF US-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS ON BASIS OF TOTH ISSUE.
YUGOSLAV PRESS PRIOR TO TITO'S STATEMENT TENDED TO USE
MATERIAL IN U.S. ARTICLES, GENERALLY OUT OF CONTEXT
BUT IN ANY CASE MOST OFTEN MISQUOTING AMBASSADOR'S AIRPORT
COMMENTS. PAO IS SENDING A LETTER TO CHIEF EDITORS OF YUGOSLAV
MEDIA ATTACHING TRANSCRIPT OF AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS AT
THE AIRPORT AND CALLING ATTENTION TO THEIR DISTORTED
VERSIONS THEREOF.

5. IN ADDITION TO SENDING DEPARTMENT'S STATEMENT TO KEY MEMBERS
YUGOSLAV PRESS, EMBOFF HAS APPOINTMENT WITH KELIC
(EVERONE ELSE ON NORTH AMERICAN DESK ON LEAVE) AT FSFA,
NINE A.M. AUGUST 3, AND WILL DEPOSIT COPY WITH HIM AS
WELL. (KELIC'S OFFICE TODAY TOLD US HE WAS BUSY AND COULDN'T
SEE ANYONE UNTIL TOMORROW).

6. HAVE ALSO RECEIVED CALLS FROM OTHER EMBASSIES
REQUESTING INFORMATION ON MATTER. WE ARE (1) SAYING
THAT YUGOSLAVS HAVE MISREAD THROUGH FAULTY PRESS REPORTS
(ESPECIALLY THEIR OWN) AMBASSADOR'S AIRPORT COMMENTS,
(2) DEFENDING CORRECTNESS OF US POSITION ON TOTH, BUT
(3) STRESSING THAT WITH CASE OUT OF WAY NOW US-YUGOSLAV
RELATIONS SHOULD BE BETTER.

7. BELIEVE THAT DEPARTMENT MUST FORTIFY ISSUANCE OF
STATEMENT BY CALLING IN BELOVSKI AND MAKING IT CLEAR
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THAT U.S. REJECTS ALLEGATIONS MADE IN TITO INTERVIEW
AGAINST AMBASSADOR AND AGAINST U.S. POLICY TOWARD
YUGOSLAVIA AND THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT IN GENERAL.
SWEITZER

NOTE BY OC/T: DISSEMINATION COORDINATED WITH MR. OTTO, S/S-O.

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